



# PatENT

ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR MIGRANTS

## Migrant Entrepreneurship in Portugal

Report by TecMinho

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# **Introduction - Overview**

The aim of this report is to develop comprehensive research showing current data on entrepreneurship in Portugal (a general overview) and about entrepreneurial opportunities for migrants.

The document begins with a general overview of the importance of Entrepreneurship programs in Portugal, followed by a presentation of the stakeholders in entrepreneurship. After this global overview, a special focus is given to the characterisation of migrant entrepreneurship and how it is being implemented nationwide, starting with an outlook on migration in Portugal and including the results gathered through a survey applied to migrant entrepreneurs.

The goal of the report is to provide a comprehensive overview of the up-to-date situation with migrant entrepreneurs in the country, and to get to know what skills should be addressed for migrant entrepreneurs and supports are available for them to apply to establish a business and possibly patent their innovative projects and products. This study will be a guiding tool for opening educational hubs for migrant entrepreneurship.



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# **Literature review**

The literature review for this report included two different components:

- **First stage:** analysis of available information regarding the Portuguese panorama on entrepreneurship, migration, migrant entrepreneurship. This was carried out through article publications, reports, websites, and other sources, and made it possible to deepen identified best practices. The results are available in the chapters about *Stakeholders in Entrepreneurship in Portugal, Migration in Portugal - Background, Entrepreneurship support for migrants – initiatives*.
- **Second stage:** data collection through a survey for migrant entrepreneurs in Portugal regarding their views and experiences in entrepreneurship, business creation and Intellectual Property, namely patenting.

Both phases are further explained in the following chapters.

## Stakeholders in Entrepreneurship in Portugal

Portugal is a country committed to boosting entrepreneurship in society, which is a key component for its economic development in a globalised and competitive market. There are many challenges facing entrepreneurs who want to set up their own business, particularly issues related to bureaucracy, access to finance and other support.

According to the study “Ecossistema de Empreendedorismo em Portugal – Facts and Figures”, over the last few years, Portugal has focused on supporting entrepreneurship through a series of measures and initiatives that include training in this area, the development of business incubation infrastructures and greater mobilisation of venture capital. Based on these initiatives, Eurostat (the European Union's statistics office) reports that in the second quarter of 2021, the registration of new companies in Portugal increased by 36 per cent, and that in that year the most important sectors were real estate activities, direct sales to customers, information and communication, finance and retail trade.

Entrepreneurship is also linked to the issue of academic training, which is demonstrated by the fact that higher education institutions (HEIs) around the world, and in Portugal, are investing more in their students' entrepreneurial skills. In this context, we can see the creation and/or growth of technology transfer offices that promote entrepreneurship, as well as the participation of HEIs in initiatives (courses, competitions, awards, workshops) and in interface entities and science and technology parks, which operate by providing a close link between academia and the surrounding society.

As entrepreneurship is an important factor in the development of the national



economy, the study "Entrepreneurship Ecosystem in Portugal - Facts and Figures" approaches it from an ecosystem perspective: "an entrepreneurial or innovation ecosystem is a friendly environment for the emergence of new companies. It is made up of the most diverse agents of entrepreneurship under the influence of regulatory mechanisms or market characteristics, with a view to business development. Interconnection is based on trust, balance and dynamism". Thus, the **stakeholders** in this ecosystem range from the entrepreneur to central and local government bodies, educational organisations, sector associations, etc:

- Entrepreneur: greater power of influence in the ecosystem, enables new businesses to generate economic, technological and social development;
- Investors: provide access to capital for business growth;
- Accelerators: not always financial investment, they offer mentoring to help target and find the market, as well as looking for investors;
- Incubators: usually linked to universities, they welcome companies and offer physical space and training;
- Universities and other HEI: they train entrepreneurs (migrants and otherwise), as well as helping to realise the region's technological potential;
- Government: boosts the ecosystem through programmes, specific policies or support (financial, communication and visibility) through central and local public administration. There are national initiatives to boost entrepreneurship and migrant entrepreneurship, but municipalities also play an important role in this area.
- Sectoral organisations: help create and enable integration programmes with other economic environments;
- Community: participates in the actions and culture of entrepreneurship, benefits at various levels, as a career option.

When addressing **migrant entrepreneurship**, practically all of these stakeholders are involved, depending on the background of the entrepreneur and in the business idea that he/she would like to bring to the market. But we can add another major stakeholder in the Portuguese context: the **Alto Comissariado para as Migrações** (High Commissioner for Migration). This public institute is involved in welcoming and integrating migrants, namely through the development of transversal public policies, centres and support offices for migrants, providing an integrated response from public services. Its activities include the creation of National Support Centres for the Integration of Migrants, with various initiatives including entrepreneurship training for migrants.



# Migration in Portugal - Background

According to the "[Observatory of Migration – Immigration in Figures / Observatório das Migrações - Imigração em Números](#)" (2023), only 7 out of every 100 residents in Portugal are foreigners, which places the country in the group of European Union countries with the lowest percentage of foreign residents. In January 2022, Portugal ranked 18th among European Union countries in terms of the relative importance of foreigners in the total number of residents. Among the countries of the European Union, Portugal is one of the most aged member states with serious demographic weaknesses, due to demographic ageing and, in recent years, negative natural balances not compensated by the migratory balance.

As a recent immigrant country, compared to other European Union countries, Portugal has mainly received immigrants to meet the needs of the national economy. In recent decades, labour immigration has predominantly been associated with subordinate, manual and low-skilled activities, concentrated in sectors of the economy that are less attractive to national workers. In the last decade, however, Portugal has seen a diversification of foreign entry profiles and an increase in other flows (students, researchers and highly qualified, self-employed, entrepreneurs, and retirees), diluting the over-representation of entries for subordinate activities. In the last decade Portugal has attracted and strengthened new immigration profiles. In 2021, the ten most numerous foreign nationalities in Portugal represented 68% of all foreign residents: in first place is Brazilian nationality (29.3% of foreign residents, 204.7 thousand residents), followed by British (6% or 41.9 thousand), Cape Verdean (4.9% or 34.1 thousand), Italian (4.4% or 30.8 thousand), Indian (4.3% or 30.3 thousand, showing the biggest increase since 2020), Romanian (4.1% or 28.9 thousand), Ukrainian (3.9% or 27.2 thousand), French (3.8% or 26.7 thousand), Angolan (3.7% or 25.8 thousand) and Chinese (3.3% or 22.8 thousand, decreasing since 2020).

In Portugal, in recent decades, the foreign population has always had higher activity rates than the Portuguese population, a trend that is common in most European Union countries. As can be seen in other immigration destinations, the foreign population in Portugal is channelled into the least attractive jobs on the labour market, jobs with low or no qualifications, which are associated with harsher working conditions and high levels of insecurity. which are associated with harsher working conditions and high levels of insecurity. The distribution of foreign workers across occupational groups in the Portuguese labour market does not necessarily reflect their qualifications. Foreign workers, compared to Portuguese workers, have a higher percentage of workers who do not use their qualifications in the jobs they do in the Portuguese labour market.

Portugal is among the EU27 member states where those born outside the



European Union (non-EU) have the highest rates of entrepreneurship (percentage of self-employed workers per labour force) (17.4% in 2020), ranking fourth among EU27 countries. In recent years, foreigners have tended to opt more and more to enter the Portuguese labour market as employers.

The precarious labour situation of immigrant workers tends to expose them to greater vulnerability and unemployment in times of crisis when compared to national workers. It turns out that foreigners are more affected by fluctuations in unemployment than nationals, also given the economic sectors and professional groups they belong to, and are seen as necessary workers in times of economic growth and dismissed in times of market slowdown.

As in other European countries, in Portugal foreign residents have a higher risk of poverty and live with greater material deprivation when compared to locals. In 2021, the risk of poverty for foreigners was 35 per cent (+13 percentage points compared to the 22.1 per cent risk for nationals), a figure that shows a decrease compared to 2015, when the risk of poverty was 45.1 per cent for the resident foreign population and 25.1 per cent for the Portuguese. There continue to be differences between foreign nationals from a European Union country (EU27) with a lower risk of poverty or social exclusion (8 per cent in 2017 but rising to 27 per cent in 2021) and non-EU foreign nationals (NPT) with a higher risk of poverty or social exclusion (37.4 per cent in 2021, compared to 49.7 per cent in 2015).

## Entrepreneurship support for migrants - initiatives

Over the last few years, Portugal has invested in helping entrepreneurs by building capacity in this area, developing business incubation infrastructures and mobilising more venture capital. These efforts are essential if the most innovative companies are to overcome the "valley of death" that typically affects companies in the context of the process of increasing the TRL (Technology Readiness Level) of the most innovative technologies. This support has contributed to an increase in the rate of entrepreneurship, as well as a reduction in the mortality rate of young companies, although start-ups continue to identify severe funding restrictions as one of the constraints to their survival (*Ecossistema de Empreendedorismo em Portugal – Facts and Figures*, n.d.). The construction of the national entrepreneurship ecosystem has been undergoing changes over the last few years, largely reinforced by national and European public policies. The creation of legal support for



entrepreneurship, national public policies for entrepreneurship, and the creation of the National Incubator Network in 2016 are all factors contributing to the growth in the number of entrepreneurs either from Portuguese nationality, or from other nationalities (EU or non-EU countries).

Entrepreneurship is often seen as a means of labour integration for the immigrant population in the host country. Migrants take up entrepreneurship mainly to avoid unemployment, make the most of their skills and resources, increase their income and create jobs, both within the family and in the community in which they live (Coutinho et al., 2008). As well as wanting to improve their quality of life, they have dreams of personal fulfilment and seek to overcome their own obstacles and those specific to migration.

We can differentiate between **support measures/initiatives/programs for entrepreneurship (at a general level)** and **support measures/initiatives/programs for migrant entrepreneurship**.

**At a general level:**

- a. [Portugal 2030](#): National program that implements the Partnership Agreement between Portugal and the European Commission to apply European Funds to the development of the Portuguese economy between 2021 and 2027 (including entrepreneurship support).
- b. [The Institute for Employment and Vocational Training \(IEFP\)](#) provides instruments to promote entrepreneurship through support for the creation of companies and self-employment, within the scope of the Support Programme for Entrepreneurship and the Creation of Self-Employment and Empreende XXI.
- c. [IAPMEI - Instituto de Apoio às Pequenas e Médias Empresas e à Inovação \(Institute for the Support of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and Innovation\)](#). To this end, it develops various measures to support entrepreneurship and business investment depending on the stage of development of the idea or business: the StartUP Voucher, StartUP Visa, Vale Incubação, Tech Visa and SI Empreendedorismo.

Other organisations promote initiatives to support entrepreneurship with diverse audiences, such as Portugal Ventures, ANJE, Banco Português de Fomento, the National Association of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, among others.

The following are programs designed specifically to **promote entrepreneurship in Portugal among non-Portuguese nationals**, namely migrants:



## **1. Migrant Entrepreneur Support Office / Gabinete de Apoio ao Empreendedor Migrante (GAEM)**

The High Commissioner for Migration (Alto Comissariado para as Migrações - ACM) has been developing initiatives to support entrepreneurship in Portugal since 2006, through the National Support Centres for the Integration of Migrants (CNAIM), as well as through projects implemented in partnership with different institutions (Immigrant Associations, Non-Governmental Organisations, Municipalities, among others). In 2015, ACM created the **Migrant Entrepreneur Support Office (GAEM)**, which is aimed at migrant entrepreneurs (immigrants, emigrants and refugees) who want to develop a business idea in Portugal or who already have a business created, regardless of its complexity or the amount of financial investment, and who need guidance and operational support to realise whether this idea is viable, as well as to structure and develop it. The GAEM guides the entrepreneur through the structuring of a business idea and its implementation, through the procedures that lead to the creation of a company and through liaising with the various organisations within or outside ACM that are involved in supporting the business (generic information, referrals, facilitating contacts, etc.).

Whenever justified, a GAEM technician can accompany the entrepreneur to meetings with Portuguese institutions or travel to the location where the business will be implemented. When a workspace is needed to carry out specific tasks, the entrepreneur can count on a workstation at GAEM's premises in Lisbon (by prior appointment and subject to availability).

GAEM's support takes the form of the following main activities: personalised support/meetings; Promoting Immigrant Entrepreneurship Project - PEI (courses); Entrepreneurship Project for International Students - PEPEI; workshops, etc. Nevertheless, these offices are only situated in 3 locations: CNAI Lisbon (all activities), CNAIM Norte (in Porto for personalised support/meetings; PEI; PEPEI) and CNAIM Algarve (in Faro, for generic information on support for business creation and referral to services; POP-UP Store). According to ACM data, from 2015 to 2020, GAEM provided 1.149 consultations, promoted courses, held workshops and POP-UP Shops to give visibility to businesses and fostered liaison with various organisations that support entrepreneurship. On average, around 200 people a year take part in the courses that are promoted, around 300 receive specialised and individual support and around 230 take part in other initiatives (such as workshops or pop-up shops). Between 2017 and 2018, the promoting entrepreneurship for refugees' activities included 2 courses, 24 participants, 3 formalised businesses; there were 798 specialised assistance and technical support for entrepreneurs and 16 businesses formalised. Between 2009-2018, there were 123 Promoting Immigrant Entrepreneurship Project courses, with 2068 participants, and 168 formalised businesses.



## **2. Project PEI – Promoting Immigrant Entrepreneurship Project**

PEI project (Projeto Promoção do Empreendedorismo Imigrante) was created by the High Commissioner for Migration - ACM within the main activities from GAEM, and has been running throughout the country since 2009. The PEI initiative aims to foster entrepreneurship among immigrant communities, with a special focus on those living in more vulnerable neighbourhoods (ACM, I.P., n.d.). This activity is materialised through **“Support for Business Creation”** face-to-face **courses** (currently being implemented at the Lisbon and Porto CNAIMs), **business consultancy tailored sessions**, to develop personal, social and business management skills that are fundamental to setting up a business, and to facilitate links between potential entrepreneurs and existing entrepreneurship support programmes run by various organisations, and **workshops**.

“The main characteristic of this project is that it is a real business-building process and not a business preparation course, since the whole process is based on the participant's knowledge and motivation, with the training process and its itinerary being a strategy for questioning internal realities (motivations, attitudes, behaviours, knowledge) and external realities (business means and opportunities) and making them a reality” (Couteiro & Ferreira, 2014).

The PEI project/course is aimed at immigrant citizens who want to structure a business idea with a view to implementing it. So far in 2020, a total of 2,384 citizens have taken part in the training programmes of PEI, 695 of whom are Brazilian nationals. The majority (1497) are women. With the help of these training courses, immigrant businesses have emerged on the Portuguese market, with 206 businesses having been formalised by 2019. Most of these projects were launched by women (13), six by men and three by both. "As well as confirming the trend that this support is mainly requested by women, these figures show that, for the first time and in a clear way, women have also become the public that most effectively realises their projects," the ACM told Lusa (the Portuguese national news agency).

**The "Support for Business Creation" course** (62 hours) takes place over ten weeks (10 group sessions and 8 individual sessions) with guidance of trainers that are mostly professionals with previous experience in creating and running a business. The trainers are actively involved in the participants' business plan development. It is the adviser's job to remain firmly realistic and to consider all the aspects of the business and not be swept away by participant's enthusiasm. The course guides participants in structuring a business idea and developing entrepreneurial skills. The participants who produce a business plan at the end of the course that is deemed viable by the trainers receive a recommendation letter that they may use in the future to obtain financing and/or secure work space (about 25% receive this



letter). Participants with a viable business plan may continue to the second phase of the project (the Business Consultancy), while those who have not yet reached this stage, may choose to continue developing their business idea through the Specialised support for the Entrepreneurs programme provided by the ACM.

The **Business consultancy** is the second part of the programme: tailored individual sessions that provide further advice and support to its participants until they implement their business plan. In this part of the project, the trainers can focus solely on the individuals and provide them with all the necessary support to develop and fine-tune their business idea and turn it into reality. The support may take a form of information provision regarding access to finance, help with filling in licences and forms needed, assistance with securing a workspace/station, or going over the contracts with participants and explaining the language/obligations. In cases where the information/advice required cannot be provided in-house, the trainers will refer the participants to relevant external actors or authorities. The third part of the programme includes **workshops, meetings and events** by ACM that further support migrant entrepreneurs in their quest to run an independent business.

ACM has stated that the key success factors of the service are the high investment (both in terms of time and engagement) of the advisers and their ability to keep the beneficiaries in check with reality and personal abilities. The advisers of this service have a good knowledge of all the topics pertinent to business creation (taxes, regulations, marketing, accounting etc.) and to other areas that might interest the migrants as well (such as residence permits, health care, and others). To help trainers and other entities who are implementing the project, GAEM has devised a **guide on how to implement the course**.

### **3. PEI 2.0**

The online version of the PEI adapts the methodology of the "Support for Business Creation" Course to the online format, working on the same topics and using the same materials, providing a different form of interaction and progression in the training. The general aim of this training is to cover some of the various topics related to the subject of creating a business, in a simplified way and with accessible language, to help you reflect on this process and support you in developing business ideas that you have, want to test and possibly put into practice. The courses are aimed at third country nationals, i.e. immigrants from countries outside the European Union, who have not yet obtained Portuguese nationality, and who have a valid residence permit, or who can prove that they are dealing with this process with the Immigration and Borders Service.



The 10 weeks / 10 topics course (10 group sessions and 9 individual sessions with a specialist trainer) include the following topics: Business, Business Ideas, Product and Service, Customers, Competition, Market, Distribution, Investment and Costs, Sales, Results. There is a pre-defined timetable for the moments of sharing and for clarifying doubts, but the trainee does the training on their own timetable. The course includes a training component with videos and resources to read and support the acquisition of knowledge and tools, and a practical component with challenges and tasks to help define the business concept and provide the necessary elements to draw up a financial plan.

At the end of the course, the participants are expected to have a pitch-type business presentation; a dossier with the worksheets carried out during the training; a file with a financial map reflecting the defined concept; Certificate of Attendance.



#### **4. Startup Visa program**

The IAPMEI - Instituto de Apoio às Pequenas e Médias Empresas e à Inovação is a body linked to the Ministry of Economy and Employment with a special importance on initiatives to support and promote entrepreneurship in Portugal. IAPMEI promotes the **Startup Visa**, a national programme to welcome foreign

entrepreneurs, without permanent residence in the Schengen Area, who wish to develop an entrepreneurship and innovation project in Portugal, with a view to being granted a residence visa and residence permit. The programme is aimed at two groups of entrepreneurs:

- a) Entrepreneurs who wish to develop entrepreneurial and innovative projects in Portugal, even if they have not yet set up a company.
- b) Entrepreneurs who already have business projects in their home countries and wish to carry out their activities in Portugal.

The programme runs continuously, and entrepreneurs can register and submit applications online via IAPMEI website. The entrepreneur begins the process by registering on the IAPMEI website and showing interest in business incubators. After receiving a positive response from at least one business incubator, the entrepreneur must submit their StartUP Visa application to IAPMEI. In the event of a favourable decision by IAPMEI (according to a set of rules), the contract between the entrepreneur and the incubator should be formalised (in a physical incubation model), with IAPMEI monitoring the project.

## **5. Initiatives within Municipal Plans for the Integration of Migrants**

According to the "Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027" by the European Commission, several municipalities have developed their Municipal Plan for the Integration of Migrants, a local policy instrument that brings together and articulates the various initiatives for the resident migrant population, with the aim of promoting their inclusion and integration in the municipality. That also includes initiatives that focus on support for the migrant entrepreneurship, like workshops, entrepreneurs' fair, etc. For instance, the municipality of Leiria's support for the employability and entrepreneurship of the migrant population includes the GIP (Immigrant Professional Insertion Office), in addition to the general services provided to the population in general, such as the Municipality's and the IEFP, as a public employment service.



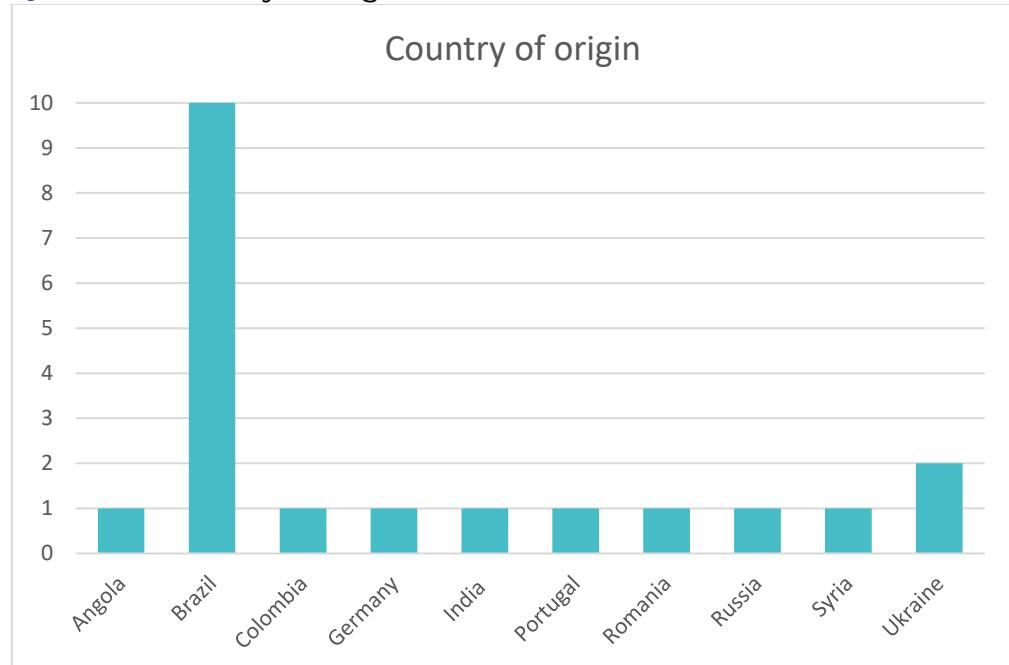
# Survey regarding Entrepreneurship for migrants

In order to have a broader understanding of the situation of migrant entrepreneurs in Portugal, a survey was prepared to gather feedback from this target group. The questionnaire is the same as the one launched in all partner countries.

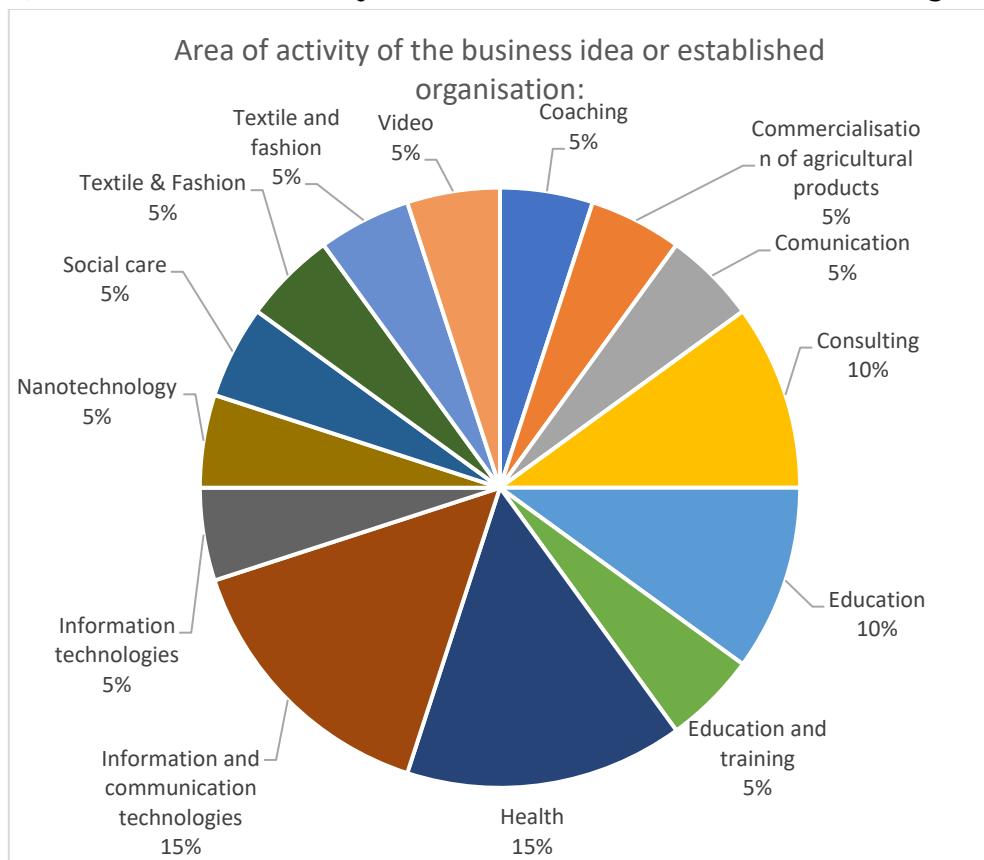
After several questions regarding personal elements, such as name, age, the survey included questions with different types of approach: open-ended questions, Single-selection multiple-choice questions, Multiple choice questions with multiple selection, rating scale.

We received feedback from 20 entrepreneurs. These are the results obtained:

[Question: Country of origin](#)



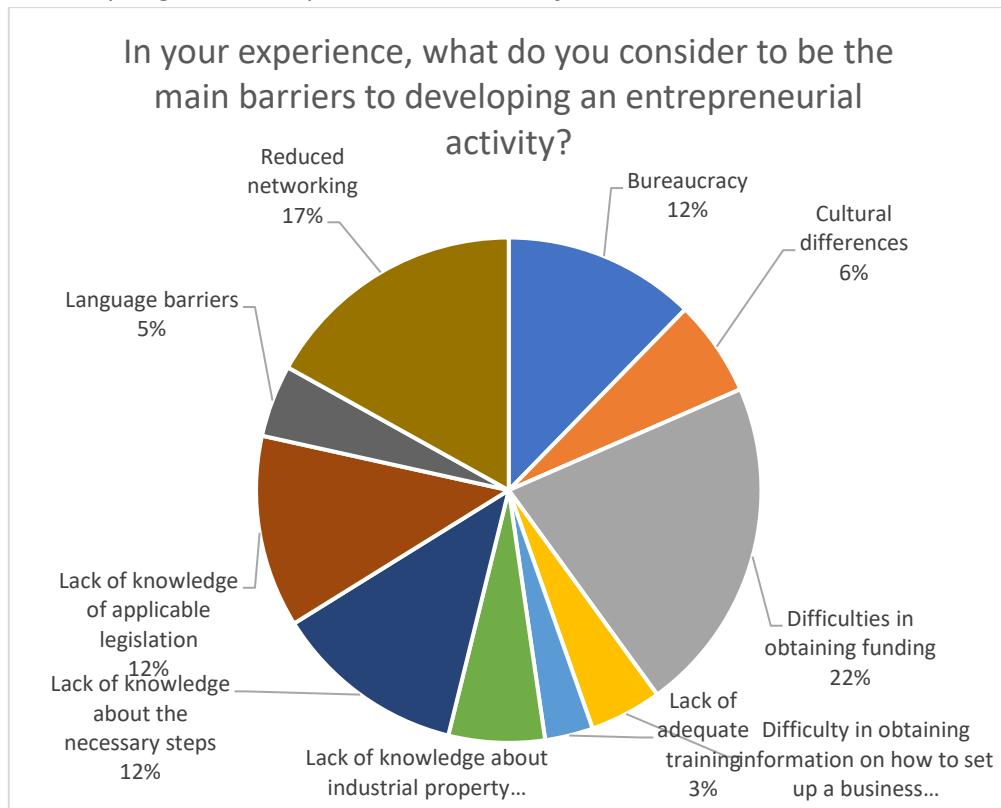
Question: Area of activity of the business idea or established organisation:



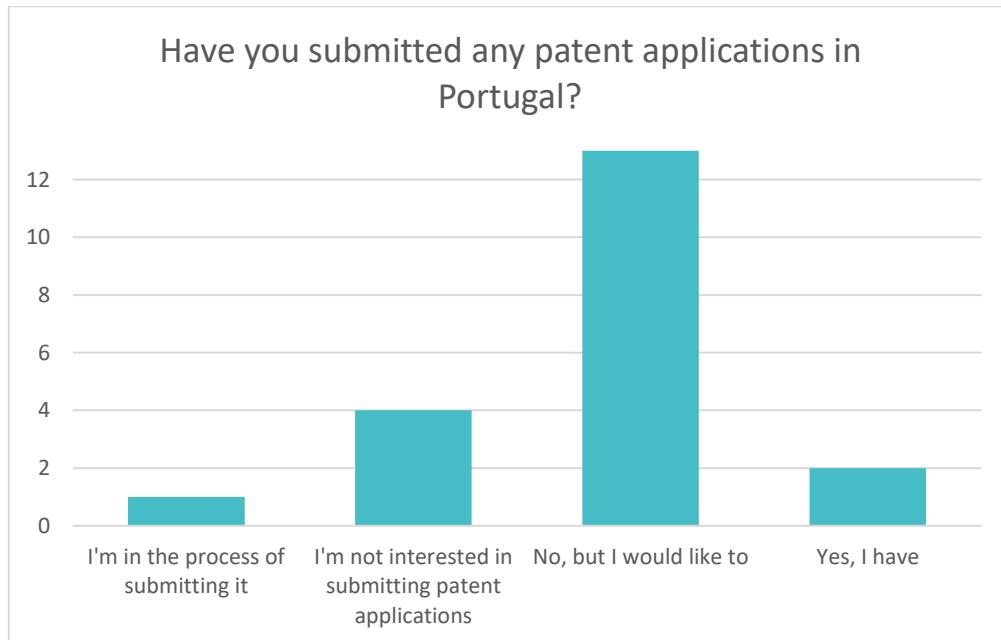
Question: Have you already set up a company in Portugal?



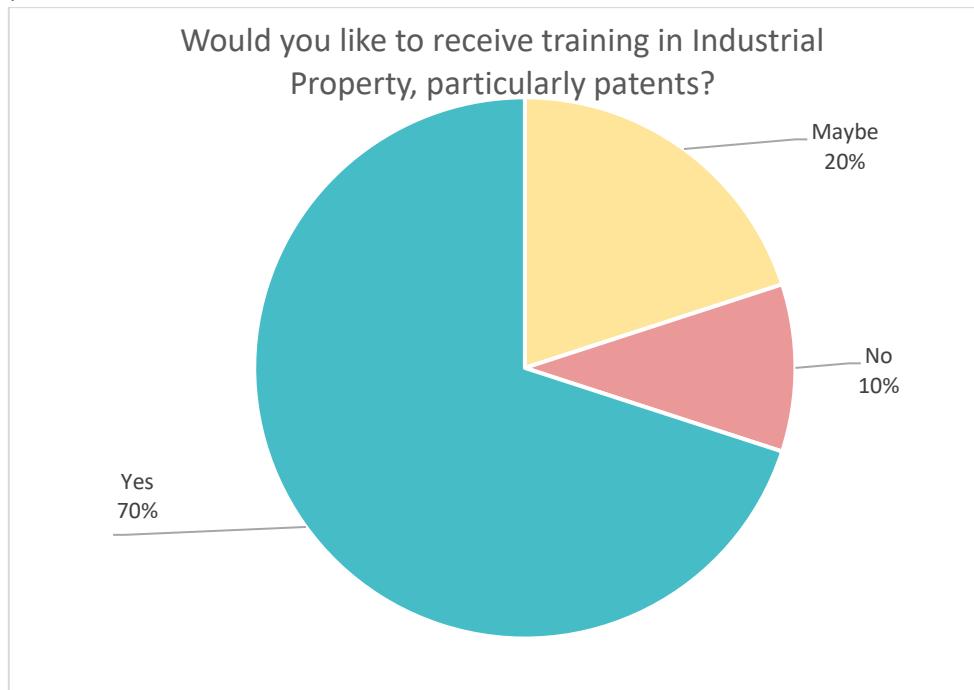
**Question:** In your experience, what do you consider to be the main barriers to developing an entrepreneurial activity?



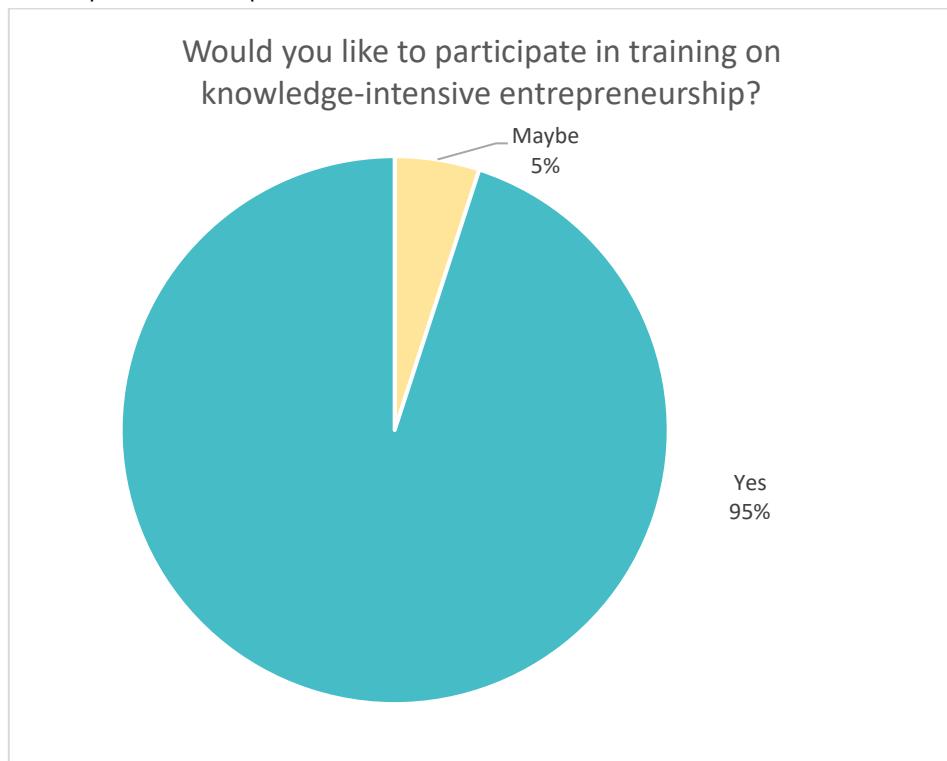
**Question:** Have you submitted any patent applications in Portugal?



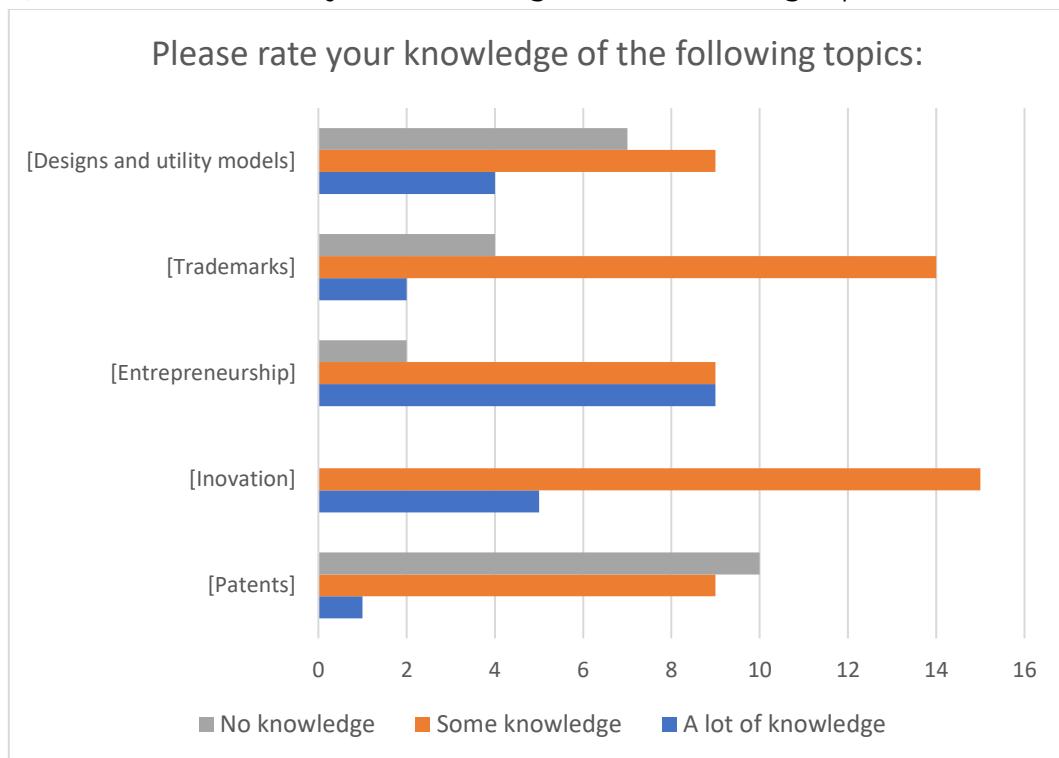
**Question:** Would you like to receive training in Industrial Property, particularly patents?



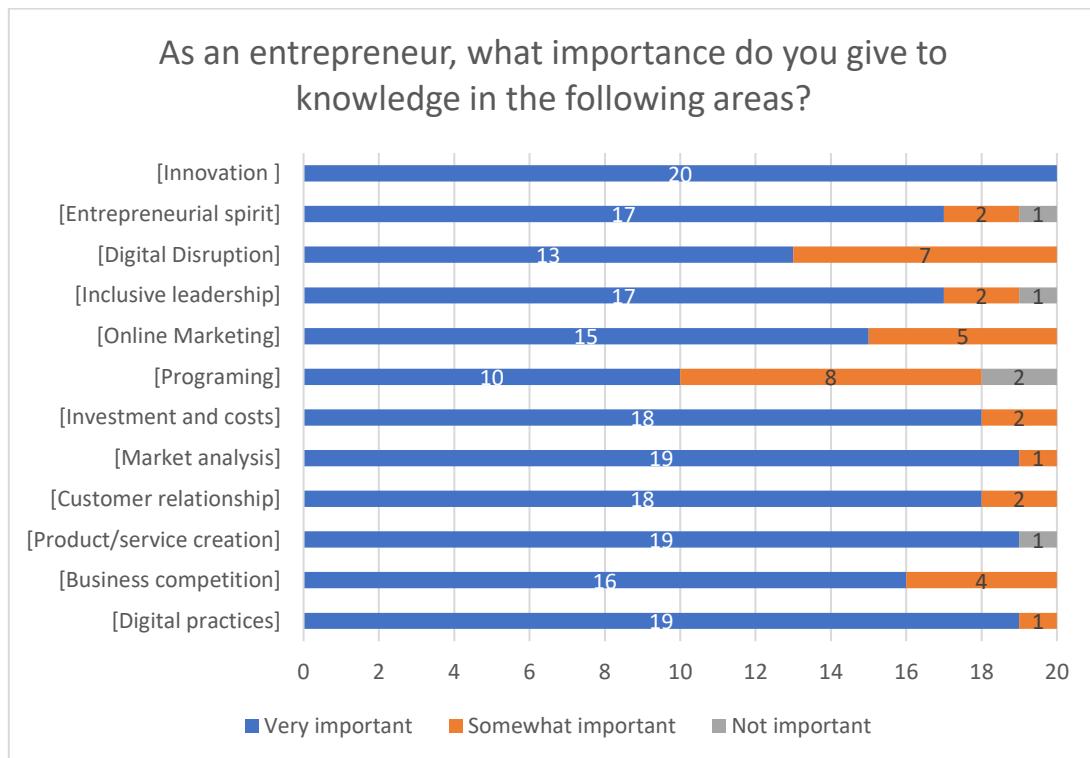
**Question:** Would you like to participate in training on knowledge-intensive entrepreneurship?



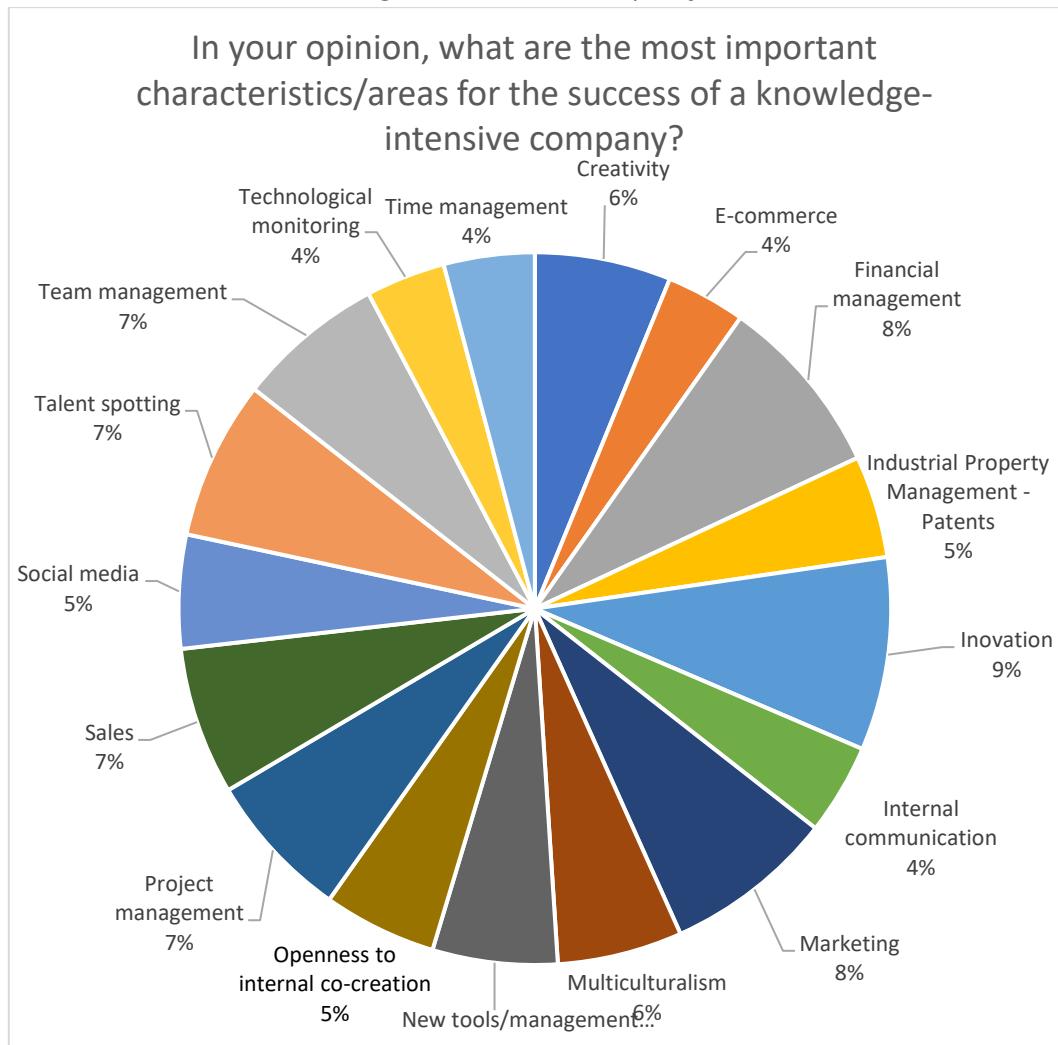
Question: Please rate your knowledge of the following topics:



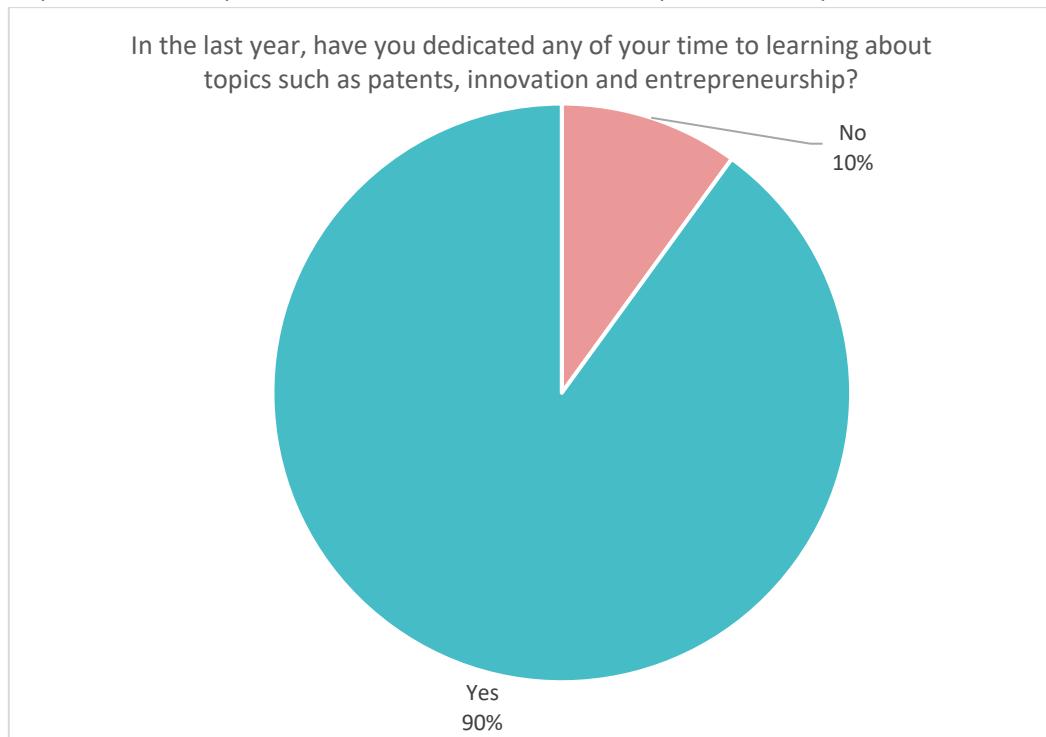
Question: As an entrepreneur, what importance do you give to knowledge in the following areas?



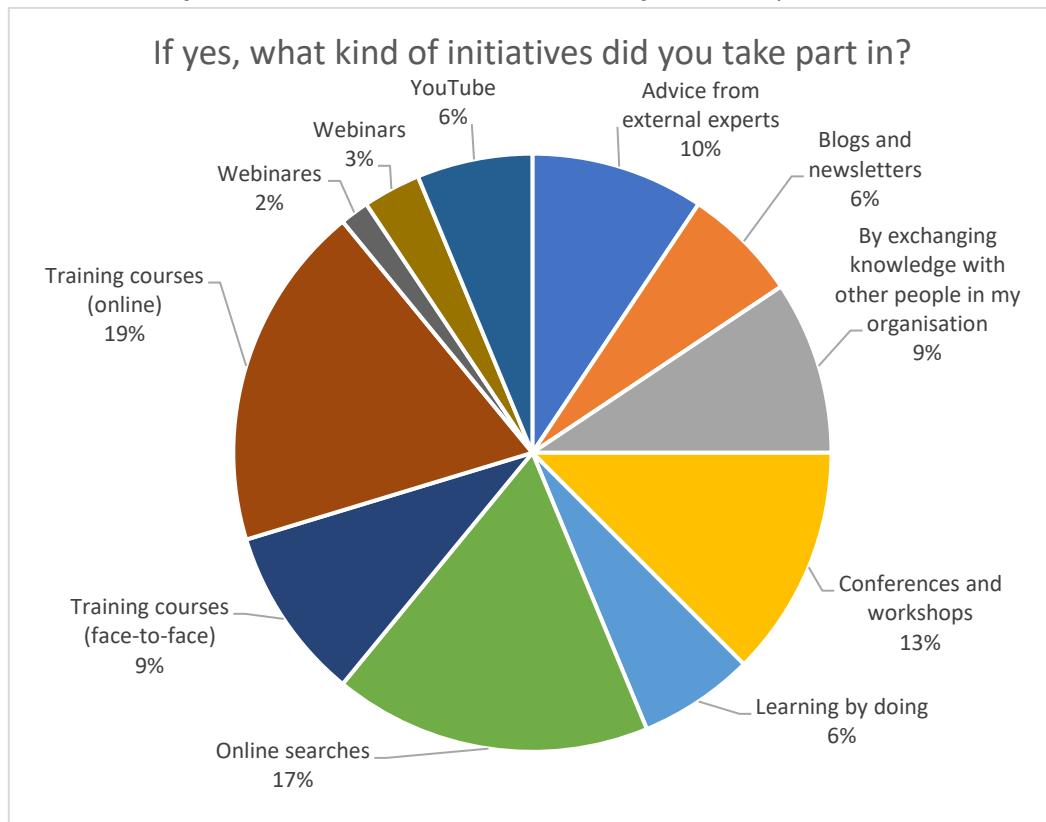
Question: In your opinion, what are the most important characteristics/areas for the success of a knowledge-intensive company?



**Question:** In the last year, have you dedicated any of your time to learning about topics such as patents, innovation and entrepreneurship?



**Question:** If yes, what kind of initiatives did you take part in?



According to the data, and reflecting the data collected by literature review, the clear majority of migrant entrepreneurs have **origins** in Brazil. Not all of the participants in the questionnaire have already established a company/business, but the majority wants to and needs support to do it.

The main **areas** in which they have a business idea or have established already an organisation are Health, and Information and communication technologies, which are two areas where patenting procedures are very relevant.

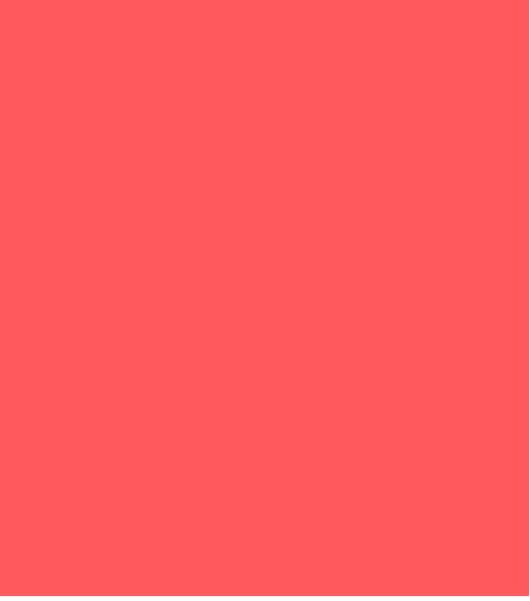
According to the survey data, the main **obstacles** for these migrant entrepreneurs are difficulties in obtaining funding (22%), followed by Reduced networking (17%). Other important answers point out Bureaucracy, Lack of knowledge about the necessary steps, and Lack of knowledge of applicable legislation (12% each).

**Patenting** is a central element of the Patent project, which is why this survey sought to find out more about the state of play regarding the participants. A clear minority have already patented (2 answers) or are in the process of doing so (1 person), but a large majority say they have not yet done so but wish to do so (13 answers).

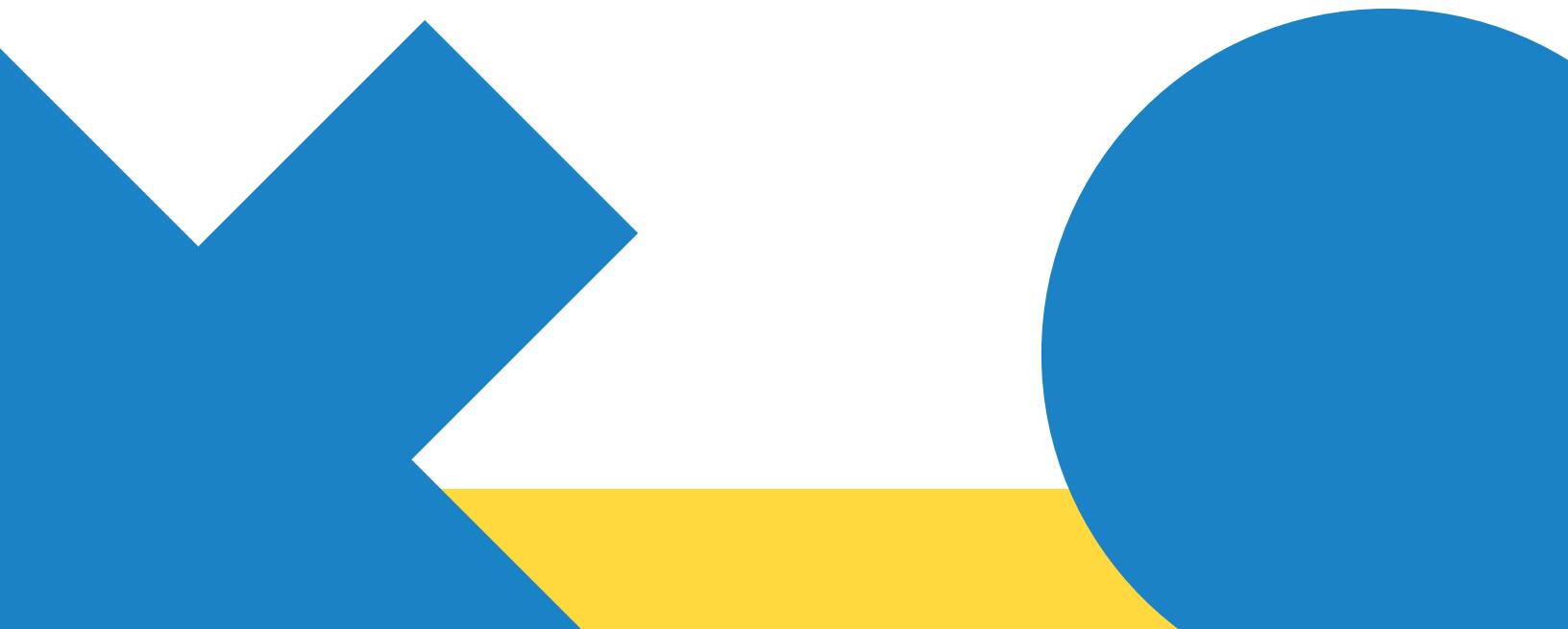
**Training in patenting** is seen as very important as 70 per cent want to receive training in the area and around 95 per cent wish to take part in training on knowledge-intensive entrepreneurship skills, which is very significant for the PatENT project initiatives. In order to gather information about what topics migrant entrepreneurs would like to address in the future training by the PatENT project, we asked participants to evaluate their knowledge in some areas related to entrepreneurship and patenting. Patenting is clearly the area where respondents have less knowledge, as is design and utility models, and trademarks. In the last year, the majority of the respondents have dedicated some time to learning about topics such as patents, innovation and entrepreneurship (90%). They have done so mainly through Online Training courses (19%), online searches (17%), and conferences/workshops (13%).

When asked about what topics are important for entrepreneurs that could be addressed in training (from a list of given topics), there isn't a short list of topics that seem more important, as all of them have relevance for the respondents. Also, when asked about what are the most important characteristics/areas for the success of a knowledge-intensive company, the answers show that from the given list of characteristics, all seem very relevant, not particularly emphasising in one.





# **Best practices in Entrepreneurship and Patent Training for migrants**



The field research into training initiatives in Portugal aimed at young migrants that focus on topics such as entrepreneurship and patent submission included the search for training courses that cover these topics, to analyse possible good practices. The primary goal of this research is to examine and evaluate existing practices that have facilitated the development of businesses and patenting of innovative concepts by migrants in Portugal.

As a country committed to boosting entrepreneurship, we can find in the Portuguese society many initiatives, such as workshops, bootcamps, awards, training programs, to cultivate entrepreneurship and the creation of new businesses, all with different target groups: some are aimed at young students (high schools), others to students from Higher Education Institutions; some programs are focused on young adults that wish to create a new business, and we can also find other initiatives intended for migrants, although these are in smaller numbers. Nevertheless, the programs tend to only focus on the topic of "Entrepreneurship" and not on "Patenting", as patenting tends to be a follow-up phase of the creation of a business and not all businesses will be able to patent (or patenting will not make sense for them, depending on the activity in itself).

During the field research, we were able to find only two training courses that are aimed at migrant entrepreneurs, and these two courses turn out to be one and the same: the "Support for Business Creation" course from the PEI project promoted by ACM (High Commissioner for Migration) started out as a face-to-face course and was replaced by an online course. It has been promoted with success since 2009, yet, this 62 hour-long course focuses on many topics regarding the creation of a business, but does not have a module solely dedicated to patenting or intellectual property.

It is possible to find courses or other initiatives that include some kind of training regarding the support to entrepreneurs, but usually they are not aimed exclusively at migrants (even though they can apply). Other initiatives may have been promoted for migrant entrepreneurs in fostering entrepreneurship and patenting skills, but there is a lack of online information about this type of training activity. Therefore, our best practice report is scarce in findings.



## 1. Best practice: "Support for Business Creation" Course from Project PEI

<b>Identification of the initiative/programme</b>	"Support for Business Creation" Course from Project PEI		
<b>Promoter(s)</b>	High Commissioner for Migration (ACM) within the main activities from GAEM, the Migrant Entrepreneur Support Office		
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.acm.gov.pt/pt/-/programa-de-empreendedorismo-imigrante-pe-1">https://www.acm.gov.pt/pt/-/programa-de-empreendedorismo-imigrante-pe-1</a>		
<b>Country</b>	Portugal		
<b>Active</b>	YES	Is the resource available?	
<b>Language (s)</b>	Portuguese	Online Training Programme	Enrolments are opened occasionally by the GAEM and people may apply through online inscriptions.
<b>Type of training</b>	Initially, the course was totally face-to-face, but in recent years the training went totally online.		
<b>Group(s) addressed</b>	Immigrant citizens (from outside of the EU) who want to structure a business idea with a view to implementing it.		
<b>Starting point</b>	<p>As the course is part of the PEI project (Promoting Immigrant Entrepreneurship Project), the course/training modules are the first phase of PEI project, which includes a second phase dedicated to a business consultancy. It has been running throughout the country since 2009. The PEI initiative aims to foster entrepreneurship among immigrant communities, with a special focus on those living in more vulnerable neighbourhoods.</p> <p>The course guides participants in structuring a business idea and developing entrepreneurial skills. For that, several topics</p>		



	are covered along the ten weeks of group sessions: Business, Business Ideas, Product and Service, Customers, Competition, Market, Distribution, Investment and Costs, Sales, Results/profits. The course does not include a module specifically dedicated to patents or intellectual property.
<b>Objectives</b>	The course aims to empower immigrant communities by providing practical knowledge and skills to kickstart their entrepreneurial journey.
<b>Description</b>	<p>The course has a duration of 62 hours throughout ten weeks (10 group sessions and 8 individual sessions) with guidance of trainers that are professionals with previous experience in creating and running a business. Rather than transmitting management knowledge, the participant learns a method of questioning and experimenting with the reality of their business project, drawing conclusions about its viability. This experience, which is accompanied by the trainer, enables the participant to use it in the future in new projects, independently, since one of the objectives of this project is precisely autonomy.</p> <p>The "Support for Business Creation" course includes group sessions and individual sessions which allow basic management issues and skills development to be worked on, making it suitable for micro-businesses. These sessions take place weekly.</p> <p>The Entrepreneur's Dossier (ED) - a support tool for the "Support for Business Creation" course - is a useful tool for: (a) learning about the concepts and phases associated with creating a business; (b) recording relevant information for structuring a business idea. It is given to the participant at the first session of the course.</p> <p>It includes: a) Notes: PEI - Project "Promoting Immigrant Entrepreneurship": What is it?; Working for yourself in Portugal. Can I do it?; b) Worksheets on all the topics in the course; c) Self-diagnosis of entrepreneurial skills. d) Guide to starting your business - step-by-step. This guide sets out various relevant moments in the process of setting up a business: legal structure; taxation; accounting; logistics; steps to legally set up a company.</p> <p>According to Couteiro &amp; Ferreira (2014), the critical factors for the success of PEI approach:</p> <p>(1) The person. It is essential to work on each person's intrinsic motivations, i.e. their desires, longings, goals, sensitivities, tendencies, etc. (as opposed to extrinsic motivations). This work of affirming each person's individuality and ability is the</p>



	<p>driving force behind the entrepreneurial attitude and gives the person's actions greater persistence, flexibility, focus and dynamism.</p> <p>(2) The community. The social dimension, in the strict sense of the surrounding community, is the most direct environment that surrounds the entrepreneur and which can act as a lever or a brake on entrepreneurial action. The EIP's strategy has always been to base its activities on local organizations whose role is to mobilize people, inform them and encourage them to take action.</p> <p>(3) The context. The relationship with the context is bidirectional. While it is true that the economic context limits entrepreneurial initiative, it is also true that people can seek to change their context, naturally in a more limited way. One of the most powerful strategies for dealing with this reality is to get entrepreneurs to experiment and test their business with end customers.</p>
<b>Training/learning methodology applied</b>	<p>Teacher as a mediator, active methodologies, project-based learning. In PEI, it is the entrepreneurial participant who builds up their knowledge, stage by stage, and it is up to the trainer to: (a) introduce the themes to be developed; (b) question the results obtained by the entrepreneur in the process of applying their idea; (c) encourage the participant. The learning-by-doing plays a central role.</p>
<b>Competences developed</b>	<p>Autonomy, communication, problem analysis, cooperation, entrepreneurship, negotiation, planning skills, etc.</p>
<b>Structured learning/training topics covered</b>	<p>Topics of the course: Business, Business Ideas, Product and Service, Customers, Competition, Market, Distribution, Investment and Costs, Sales, Results. There is a pre-defined timetable for the moments of sharing and for clarifying doubts, but the trainee does the training on their own timetable.</p>
<b>Results</b>	<p>In 2020, a total of 2384 people have taken part in the training programmes of PEI. The majority (1497) are women, and in 2019, around 206 businesses having been formalised by 2019.</p>
<b>Challenges</b>	<p>A study carried out in 2016 concluded that the Support for Business Creation course has challenges: reaching more people from the target groups, and having a better balance between the great number of information addressed in the course and the time for the learners to comprehend all the material.</p>
<b>Potential for</b>	<p>The topics included in this course are essential to prepare an</p>



<b>PatENT project</b>	entrepreneur with migrant background to face the market, with confidence and success. It can be a base for ideas for initiatives within the PatENT project that should be complemented with materials regarding Intellectual Property (patents, trademarks, etc.).
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The [Support for Business Creation course](#) (Curso de Apoio à Criação de Negócios) is aimed Immigrant citizens (from outside of the EU) who want to structure a business idea with a view to implementing it. As indicated before in this report, it is promoted by the High Commissioner for Migration (ACM) within the main activities from GAEM, the Migrant Entrepreneur Support Office. Available since 2009, the course has a duration of 62 hours throughout ten weeks (10 group sessions and 8 individual sessions) with guidance of trainers that are professionals with previous experience in creating and running a business. While the course is designed to support immigrants, having a basic understanding of Portuguese is beneficial for communication during group and individual sessions. The course aims to empower immigrant communities by providing practical knowledge and skills to kickstart their entrepreneurial journey.

Initially, the course was totally face-to-face, but in recent years the training went totally online. As the course is part of the PEI project (Promoting Immigrant Entrepreneurship Project), the course/training modules are the first phase of PEI project, which includes a second phase dedicated to a business consultancy.

The course guides participants in structuring a business idea and developing entrepreneurial skills. For that, several topics are covered along the ten weeks of group sessions: Business, Business Ideas, Product and Service, Customers, Competition, Market, Distribution, Investment and Costs, Sales, Results. The course does not include a module specifically dedicated to patents or intellectual property.

At the start of the course, in the group training modules, each participant is given a booklet containing all the essential information that the learner will follow along the course. The trainers leading the sessions actively engage with participants, assisting them in developing their business plans. Beyond the core curriculum, trainers also share additional insights. For instance, they might distribute newsletters from public authorities or commercial entities, keeping participants informed about relevant updates. "The course includes both theoretical and practical exercises (such as role-playing), and the participants' business ideas are often taken as examples to make the exercises as concrete as possible. Furthermore, the participants are encouraged to develop their ideas in practice by approaching potential clients and/or suppliers" (European Commission, 2016). The modules also include videos and documents/resources prepared by the trainer.

Upon completing the course's training sessions, participants who successfully



create a viable business plan — as determined by the trainers — receive a valuable recommendation letter. This letter serves as an endorsement, allowing them to seek financing or secure workspace in the future. Approximately 25% of participants are fortunate enough to receive this commendation (European Commission, 2016).

For those with viable business plans, the journey doesn't end there. They have the opportunity to progress to the second phase of the PEI project, beyond the course itself: the tailored individual sessions. This phase involves further refinement and implementation of their business ideas.

For the participants who haven't yet achieved viability for their business plans, they can opt for an alternative path to the course (not included). They may choose to participate in the Specialised Support for Entrepreneurs program offered by the Office to Active Migrants in Portugal (part of the ACM). Through this specialized support, they can continue developing their business concepts, gaining valuable insights and guidance along the way.

The course allows learners to gain a blend of **skills** essential for navigating the business landscape: entrepreneurial skills (the ability to create viable business plans), interpersonal abilities (like collaborating with other learners, communication skills, teamwork), and critical thinking and problem-solving, networking, and realistic assessment.

A study carried out in 2016 concluded that the PEI project and the Support for Business Creation course still have to face a challenge: reaching the target population. Nevertheless, in the last few years, the organiser has been working more with internet and social media and is also cooperating closely with migrant communities and public authorities on spreading information and support.

Another challenge that was found is that sometimes may be as during each session, participants receive a lot of information and advice, and there is high interactivity. That dynamic nature of the discussions and activities can sometimes make it challenging to fully comprehend all the material, especially if a participant happens to miss one of the sessions.

As a key success factor of the initiative, we may point to the volume of the information provided, the involvement of the trainers and the individual advice provided. The way the course was created by ACM and its GAEM make it easy to replicate by other organisations. They have a guide on how to implement the project that allows for adaptation.



## 2. Best Practice: IdeaLab - Laboratório de Ideias de Negócio / Business Ideas Laboratory

Promoted by TecMinho since 2009 in partnership with the Department of Production and Systems at the University of Minho, IdeaLab is a business idea training programme aimed at students, graduates, teachers and researchers in higher education, regardless of their country of origin. The support provided is completely free of charge, is given by a team of specialised consultants and mentors and includes various activities such as workshops, mentoring, networking and coaching that are implemented with the aim of supporting the development of ideas in business terms and leveraging their market potential. This business idea training programme supports their development and market potential from a socio-economic perspective. The programme supports the preparation of each team's business plan.

<b>Identification of the initiative/programme</b>	IdeaLab - Laboratório de Ideias de Negócio / Business Ideas Laboratory		
<b>Promoter(s)</b>	TecMinho in collaboration with the Production and Systems Department of the University of Minho		
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.tecminho.uminho.pt/empreender/idealab/">https://www.tecminho.uminho.pt/empreender/idealab/</a>		
<b>Country</b>	Portugal		
<b>Active</b>	YES	Is the resource available?	
<b>Language (s)</b>	Portuguese	Training and mentorship programme (face-to-face and online)	Enrolments are opened twice per year.
<b>Type of training</b>	Business ideas training and mentorship programme (face-to-face and online).		
<b>Group(s)</b>	Students, graduates, teachers and researchers in higher education from Portugal and/or migrants who want to		



<b>addressed</b>	structure a business idea from an initial business idea.
<b>Starting point</b>	Over the course of four months, the participant entrepreneurs will be accompanied by a team of coaches and mentors, who will organise a series of workshops related to the study and validation of business ideas and carry out networking and coaching activities. The various activities will take place in a hybrid format. The entrepreneurs can participate individually or in a small team.
<b>Objectives</b>	To provide business idea promoters with knowledge, methodologies and tools related to the development of innovative businesses, to facilitate the analysis, planning and implementation of marketable products or services. To stimulate entrepreneurial attitudes and skills.
<b>Description</b>	<p>IdeaLab is a business idea training programme that supports their development and market potential from a socio-economic perspective. Participants start out with a business idea, which is supported and consolidated throughout the programme with training mentorship and tutoring, so that it can be transferred to the market, with the possible creation of a business.</p> <p>The IdeaLab activities thus comprise 4 phases:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) STARTUP WORKSHOPS. Each workshop will last a total of 3 hours. Each team will receive additional training on how to draw up a business plan: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Business plan</u>: understand the main assumptions when assessing the viability of their business idea;</li> <li>b. <u>Voice of the customer</u>: Understanding customers' real needs and how to convert them into a business opportunity [online];</li> <li>c. <u>Market</u>: Understanding the size of the market (customers, competition) and how to differentiate yourself [face-to-face];</li> <li>d. <u>Strategy</u>: Understanding the positioning of the business in the market and its sustainability [online];</li> <li>e. <u>Finance</u>: Understand the economic and financial viability of the business [face-to-face];</li> <li>f. <u>Impact</u>: Understanding the impact the business has on society and people's quality of life [online];</li> <li>g. <u>Elevator Pitch</u>: Learning to develop coherent and persuasive communication of a business idea [face-to-face].</li> </ol> </li> <li>2) COACHING. Individualised support for defining and implementing business ideas - up to 6 hours per team.</li> </ol>



	<p>3) NETWORKING SESSIONS. Moments of sharing with the organisation of sessions with investors and entrepreneurs [face-to-face].</p> <p>4) PITCH DAY. Final session where promoters have the opportunity to publicly present their business ideas to a panel of guest experts mainly linked to the investment area [face-to-face].</p>
<b>Training/learning methodology applied</b>	<p>Workshops: trainer as a mediator, with theoretical presentation and active methodologies, project-based learning.</p> <p>Mentoring/tutoring: project-based learning.</p>
<b>Competences developed</b>	<p>Autonomy, motivation, communication, decision making, problem analysis, cooperation, entrepreneurship, negotiation, planning skills, financial management and marketing skills, etc.</p>
<b>Structured learning/training topics covered</b>	<p>The whole programme lasts for four months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Workshops throughout the programme: Business Plan; Voice of the customer; Market; Strategy; Finance; Impact; Elevator Pitch;</li> <li>- coaching sessions by a business coach: the sessions start with the programme and continue throughout its duration;</li> <li>- tutorship: a practical session on finances (middle of the programme)</li> <li>- mentoring: in the middle of the programme, to analyse the progress of work on the business ideas.</li> </ul> <p>In the middle of the programme, entrepreneurs submit the first version of their business plan for analysis.</p> <p>After Pitch Day, when participants present their business idea to the experts panel, and taking the feedback into consideration, the final business plan has to be submitted, concluding the IdeaLab programme.</p>
<b>Results</b>	<p>From its beginning in 2009, 24 editions of IdeaLab took place, with 778 participants. This initiative made possible the formalisation of 356 business ideas.</p> <p>Although IdeaLab is not aimed specifically at migrant entrepreneurs, but at entrepreneurs in Higher Education sector, IdeaLab supported business ideas of 38 entrepreneurs from Brazil, Cape Verde, Angola, Uruguay, Colombia, Mexico, Iran and China.</p> <p>IdeaLab was awarded an honourable mention in the "Investment in entrepreneurial skills" category at the presentation of the national results of the European</p>



	Enterprise Promotion Awards.
<b>Challenges</b>	<p>After 23 editions, the results were analysed, and some challenges were identified as points to consider for future changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reinforcing the “Finances” workshop so that participants can acquire more knowledge in financial analysis.</li> <li>- The IdeaLab programme needs time for legal advice - needs regarding legal aspects, tax advice, setting up a company, intellectual property.</li> <li>- Consider increasing the amount of hours/time with mentors for more individualised time to better work on the business plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Potential for PatENT project</b>	<p>The topics included in this course are essential to prepare an entrepreneur with migrant background to face the market, with confidence and success. It can be a base for ideas for initiatives within the PatENT project that should be complemented with materials regarding Intellectual Property (patents, trademarks, etc.) and other legal aspects.</p>



# Conclusions

The findings of this report underscore the dynamic landscape of entrepreneurship in Portugal, with a particular focus on opportunities for migrant entrepreneurs. The following conclusions emerge from the comprehensive research conducted:

**Significance of Entrepreneurship Programs:** Portugal's commitment to fostering entrepreneurship is evident through the proliferation of entrepreneurship programs. These initiatives play a pivotal role in nurturing entrepreneurial talent, driving economic growth, and fostering innovation across various sectors.

**Key Stakeholders in Entrepreneurship:** A diverse array of stakeholders, including government agencies, academic institutions, industry associations, and private enterprises, actively contribute to the entrepreneurship ecosystem in Portugal. Collaborative efforts among these stakeholders are essential for creating an enabling environment that supports aspiring entrepreneurs and facilitates their success.

**Characterization of Migrant Entrepreneurship:** Migrant entrepreneurship in Portugal represents a burgeoning segment of the entrepreneurial landscape, contributing to economic diversification and social integration. An in-depth examination of migrant entrepreneurship reveals diverse backgrounds, innovative business ideas, and a strong entrepreneurial spirit among migrant communities.

**Migration Outlook in Portugal:** Understanding the broader context of migration in Portugal provides valuable insights into the socio-economic dynamics shaping migrant entrepreneurship. Factors such as demographic trends, labour market dynamics, and policy frameworks influence the opportunities and challenges faced by migrant entrepreneurs in the country.

**Survey Insights:** The findings from the survey administered to migrant entrepreneurs offer valuable insights into their experiences, aspirations, and needs. These insights inform targeted interventions and support mechanisms aimed at addressing the specific challenges faced by migrant entrepreneurs, such as access to financing, language barriers, and cultural integration.

**Skills Development Needs:** Identifying the skills gap among migrant entrepreneurs is essential for designing tailored training programs and capacity-building initiatives. Addressing skills such as business management, financial literacy, marketing, and networking can enhance the entrepreneurial capabilities of migrants and facilitate their business success. As few programmes are dedicated to Intellectual Property and Patenting, it is clear that training for migrants in these areas are an ever-growing necessity that the PatENT project will have to address. From the best practices encountered, training for migrants should include space for mentoring with experts and focus on patenting, taking in consideration the differences among partner countries. The finances topic and legal aspects of



creating a business should be primordial in all entrepreneurial training for migrants, as it was established as two of the most sought-after areas.

**Support Infrastructure for Migrant Entrepreneurs:** Access to support infrastructure, including incubators, accelerators, mentorship programs, and funding opportunities, is critical for empowering migrant entrepreneurs to establish and grow their ventures. Strengthening the availability and accessibility of such support mechanisms can catalyse the entrepreneurial journey of migrants and maximize their contribution to the economy. Information about these types of support are important to make available on the Educational hubs.

**Pathways to Innovation and Patenting:** Encouraging innovation among migrant entrepreneurs and facilitating the patenting process for their innovative projects and products can drive competitiveness and economic growth. Creating awareness about intellectual property rights, providing assistance with patent application procedures, and fostering collaboration with research institutions are essential steps in this direction.

**Educational Hubs for Migrant Entrepreneurship:** Establishing educational hubs dedicated to migrant entrepreneurship can serve as focal points for knowledge exchange, skills development, and networking opportunities. These hubs can offer tailored training programs, mentorship support, and access to resources, thereby empowering migrant entrepreneurs to realize their entrepreneurial aspirations and contribute meaningfully to the economy.



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# PatENT

ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR MIGRANTS

## Migrant Entrepreneurship in Portugal

### Report

**Project: Patent entrepreneurship for migrants (PatENT)**

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